

HOUSE BILL 3320

By Brown

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 5;
Title 6; Title 8; Title 49 and Title 67.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-4-933, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language

Section 49-4-933.

(a) To be eligible for a Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant, a student shall:

(1) Not be ineligible for the grant under § 49-4-904;

(2) Meet the requirements of § 49-4-905;

(3) Meet the applicable academic requirements for a Tennessee HOPE scholarship or Tennessee HOPE access grant that apply to the method by which the student completed high school;

(4) Apply for a Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant and file a FAFSA; and

(5) Be admitted to and enroll in an eligible postsecondary institution.

(b) This section shall apply to a student who:

(1) Was in state custody for at least one (1) year after reaching fourteen (14) years of age;

(2) Was in state custody for at least one (1) year after reaching fourteen (14) years of age and was placed for adoption by the department of children's services or one of its adoption contract agencies, and the adoption was finalized;

or

(3) Was in state custody for at least one (1) year, and was placed in permanent guardianship by the department of children's services after reaching fourteen (14) years of age.

(c) The student shall present TSAC with official certification from the department of children's services that the student meets the eligibility requirement for the tuition grant.

(d) The student shall be eligible for the Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant:

(1) For entrance to an eligible postsecondary institution for a period of no more than four (4) years after the date of graduation from high school or its equivalent; and

(2) For a period of six (6) years after admittance to an eligible postsecondary institution, if satisfactory progress is achieved and maintained.

(e) A Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant may only be used toward the costs of tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees and required registration or matriculation fees at the eligible postsecondary institution the student attends.

(f)

(1) Before a Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant may be awarded, a student shall apply for all available financial aid, including, but not limited to, the Tennessee HOPE scholarship or Tennessee HOPE access grant, if eligible, and funds provided through the federal Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, if applicable. All financial assistance available to a student, other than the Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant, shall be applied to the student's total cost of attendance, as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 1087II, prior to the granting of a Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant.

(2) A Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant for a student attending an eligible public postsecondary institution shall cover any costs of tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees and required registration or matriculation fees remaining after applying all other student financial assistance from all sources towards the student's cost of attendance.

(3) A Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant for a student attending an eligible four-year independent postsecondary institution shall be the cost of tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees and required registration or matriculation fees remaining after applying all other student financial assistance from all sources towards the student's cost of attendance, or the average of the sum of full tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees and required registration and matriculation fees charged at all four-year public postsecondary institutions, whichever is less. A Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant for a student attending an eligible two-year independent postsecondary institution shall be the cost of tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees and required registration or matriculation fees remaining after applying all other student financial assistance from all sources towards the student's cost of attendance, or the average of the sum of full tuition, maintenance fees, student activity fees and required registration and matriculation fees charged at all two-year public postsecondary institutions, whichever is less.

(4) Notwithstanding any provision of this part to the contrary, a Tennessee HOPE scholarship or Tennessee HOPE access grant awarded to a student eligible for a Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant may be used for the cost of room and board, which shall not exceed the maximum cost of room

and board provided through the facilities of the eligible postsecondary institution that the student is attending.

(g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

(1) Guarantee acceptance by, or entrance into, any eligible postsecondary institution for youth in, or formerly in, the custody of the state; or

(2) Limit the participation of a youth, in or formerly in, the custody of the state in any other program of financial assistance for postsecondary education.

(h) Prior to February 1, 2009, TSAC, in consultation with THEC, shall prepare a report assessing the status of the Tennessee HOPE foster child tuition grant program. Such report shall include the number of students receiving the grant, the overall benefit of the grant to Tennessee foster children and recommendations for the program. The report shall be distributed to the governor, speaker of the senate, speaker of the house and each member of the general assembly.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.